

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 6-13, and 15-17 under § 102(e) as being anticipated by USP 6,324,675 issued to Dutta et al. (Dutta). In this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 14, 18, 20, and 22 to correct certain informalities in these claims. Applicants have not added or canceled any claim. Accordingly, claims 1-23 will be pending after entry of this Amendment.

I. Claims 4, 5, 14, and 18-23

The Examiner objected to claims 4, 5, and 14 as being dependent on rejected base claims, but found that these claims would otherwise be allowable if they were written in independent form. The Examiner also found claims 18-23 to be allowable. Applicants respectfully acknowledge these findings.

II. Claims 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 14, 18, 20, and 22

In this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 4, 11, 12, 14, 18, 20, and 22 to correct certain informalities in these claims. No new matter has been entered.

III. § 102(e) Rejection

A. Claims 1-3 and 6-10

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 6-10 under § 102(e) as being anticipated by Dutta. Claims 2, 3, and 6-10 are dependent either directly or indirectly on independent claim 1, which recites a method that specifies routes for a group of nets. The method of claim 1 initially specifies a total cost. For the group of nets, the method performs a first depth-first search to identify a complete routing solution that has a cost that does not exceed the total cost, where a routing solution for a group of nets includes a route for each net in the group. If the search cannot find the complete routing solution, the method increments the total cost and performs a second

depth-first search to identify a complete routing solution for the group of nets that has a cost that does not exceed the incremented total cost.

Applicants respectfully submit that Dutta does not disclose, teach, or even suggest such a method. Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the disclosure in Dutta does not relate to finding a solution for a group of two or more nets by setting a cost, performing a first depth-first search, and then incrementing the cost and performing a second depth-first search. The disclosure cited in Dutta relates to identifying a route for a net.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Dutta does not anticipate claim 1, or otherwise render it invalid. As claims 2, 3, and 6-10 are dependent either directly or indirectly on independent claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are likewise patentable over Dutta. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-3 and 6-10 under § 102(e).

B. Claims 11, 12 and 15-17

The Examiner rejected claims 11-13 and 15-17 under § 102(e) as being anticipated by Dutta. Claims 12, 13, and 15-17 are dependent either directly or indirectly on independent claim 11. Claim 11 recites a computer program that specifies routes for a group of two or more nets. This computer program includes a set of instructions for specifying a total cost. It also includes a set of instructions for performing a first depth-first search to identify, for the group of nets, a complete routing solution that has a cost that does not exceed the total cost, where a routing solution for a group of nets includes a route for each net in the group. The program also includes a third set of instructions for (1) incrementing the total cost if the search cannot find the complete routing solution, and (2) performing another depth-first search to identify a complete routing solution for the group of nets that has a cost that does not exceed the incremented total cost.

Applicants respectfully submit that Dutta does not disclose, teach, or even suggest such a program. Specifically, as mentioned above, the disclosure in Dutta does not relate to finding a solution for a group of two or more nets by setting a cost, performing a first depth-first search, and then incrementing the cost and performing a second depth-first search. The disclosure cited in Dutta relates to identifying a route for a net.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Dutta does not anticipate claim 11, or otherwise render it invalid. As claims 12, 13, and 15-17 are dependent either directly or indirectly on independent claim 11, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are likewise patentable over Dutta. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 11-3 and 15-17 under § 102(e).

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that all pending claims, namely claims 1-23, are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejections and objections is requested. Allowance is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully submitted,

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